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#7 TELEGRAM

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FOR AR, PGM/G, PGM/T, VOA, PGM/RC

E.O. 12065: N/A

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SUBJECT: RECENT BOLIVIAN PRESS COVERAGE AND COMMENTARY ON COCA
ERRADICATION AND HERBICIDE USE

1. SUMMARY: ATTACKS AGAINST PROGRAMS TO CONTROL COCA
CULTIVATION CONTINUE IN BOLIVIAN MEDIA, WITH ATTENTION
CENTERING UPON USE OF 2 4 D HERBICIDE. GOB PUBLICITY
STRESSING INOFFENSIVE NATURE OF 2 4 D TOGETHER WITH EMBASSY
AND USICA INFORMATION EFFORTS AND FACT THAT
HERBICIDES SEE HEAVY USE IN AGROINDUSTRY OF COUNTRY HAVE
BLUNTED THESE ATTACKS, WHICH SOMETIMES CARRY
XENOPHOBIC OVERTONES. RUMORS OF MASSACRES OF COCA
GROWING PEASANTS AND CLAIMS OF ABUSES BY DRUG AUTHORITIES
HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED. ALTHOUGH CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS TAKEN
STAND AGAINST NARCOTICS TRAFFIC AND HAS NOT ENTIRELY
OPPOSED COCA CROP CONTROL, SOME CHURCH AUTHORITIES HAVE
SHARPLY CRITICIZED ANTI-COCA EFFORTS. PRESS HAS
REPORTED THAT GOB HAS DECIDED TO DISCONTINUE USE OF
HERBICIDES FOR THE PRESENT. END SUMMARY.

2. BETWEEN APRIL 15 AND MAY 21, AT LEAST 98 NEWS STORIES
AND EDITORIALS CONTAINING REFERENCE TO HERBICIDE USE AND
COCA ERRADICATION APPEARED IN BOLIVIAN PRESS. RADIO
COVERAGE SIMILARLY WAS HEAVY. OF PRESS STORIES SURVEYED,
51 WERE FAVORABLE AND 47 WERE NEGATIVE. IN ADDITION, AT
LEAST 48 PAID ADVERTISEMENTS APPEARED. 39 OF THESE WERE
PLACED BY GOB AND STRESSED HARMLESS NATURE OF 2 4 D. 8
WERE PLACED BY INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS ATTACKING HERBICIDE
USE, COCA CONTROL PROGRAMS, GOB AND UNITED STATES.

3. IN REVERSE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER, FOLLOWING ARE A FEW
SAMPLES OF PRESS COVERAGE AND COMMENTARY: MAY 21
COCHABAMBA CONSERVATIVE "LOS TIEMPOS" STORY: "THE RESULTS
AND EFFECTS OF THE APPLICATION OF 2 4 D IN YAPACANI (AREA
WHERE HERBICIDE WAS EMPLOYED) WILL BE STUDIED FOR SOME
60 DAYS BY A TECHNICAL COMMITTEE, AND DEPENDING UPON THE
RESULTS, IT WILL BE DECIDED WHETHER TO DEFINITELY
SUSPEND THE UTILIZATION OF 2 4 D THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY...
CONSULTED ABOUT A STATEMENT BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH,
COLONEL GANZALES FERRY, NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE FIGHT
AGAINST THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC... EXPLAINED THAT IN 1961
THE GOVERNMENT SUBSCRIBED TO GENEVA CONVENTION WHICH
ESTABLISHED THAT PRODUCTION OF COCA MUST BE NO GREATER
THAN VOLUME OF TRADITIONAL DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION...."

4. ON MAY 20, LA PAZ CONSERVATIVE "HOY" REPORTED THAT
RIGHTWING POLITICAL PARTY, "ACCION DEMOCRATICA NACIONALLISTA,
DENOUNCED THAT THE ANTI-NARCOTICS ORGANIZATIONS HAVE
UNLEASHED A PITILESS PLUNDERING OF HOMES IN THE CHAPARE
REGION, EQUALLY AFFECTING THE INNOCENT AND THE QUIET...
THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE PARTY "CONSIDERS THAT THE UNITED
STATES, IN AN OPEN PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN, HAS IMPOSED THE
EXECUTION OF A VAST PROGRAM OF REPRESSION AGAINST THE
NARCOTICS TRAFFIC, AFFECTING THEN

ARE THE VICTIMS OF PLU
NDER AND
ABUSE..."

5. MAY 20 LA PAZ CONSERVATIVE "EL DIARIO" REPORTS:
"DURING THE FIRST MONTHS OF 1982, UP TO APRIL, THE COUNCIL
FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST THE DRUG TRAFFIC CONFISCATED 682
KILOGRAMS... OF COCAINE AND DETAINED 566 PERSONS SUSPECTED
OF INVOLVEMENT IN THIS ILLEGAL ACTIVITY... IN ADDITION
THE FOLLOWING WERE CONFISCATED: 41 VEHICLES, SIX
BUILDINGS AND 179 COCAINE FACTORIES... 939 TAMBORES
OF COCA LEAD, 536 BARRELS OF SULFURIC ACID... 50 BOXES
OF ACETONE... 24 BOXES OF ETHER... 9.5 KILOS OF MARIJUANA..."

6. MAY 20 "LOS TIEMPOS" STORY: "THE FEDERATION OF
CHAPARE COLONISTS WILL CONTROL AND PROHIBIT THE ENTRY
OF 2 4 D HERBICIDES INTO THE REGION... THE COLONIZERS ARE
CONCERNED BECAUSE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
APPARENTLY ARE MANAGING TO USE THESE HERBICIDES TO
DESTROY COCA, WHICH COULD CAUSE LOSSES TO THE COLONIZERS
WHOSE PRINCIPAL INCOME COMES FROM THIS PLANT..."

7. LA PAZ MAY 19 MODERATE "ULTIMA HORA" EDITORIAL:
"THE EMPLOYMENT OF HERBICIDES... HAS CAUSED PROTESTS BY
CAMPESIÑO ORGANIZATIONS, PROFESSIONAL AGRICULTURAL
ASSOCIATIONS AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ITSELF..."
EDITORIAL THEN MAKES FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATION: "AT A
MOMENT WHEN BOLIVIA'S ECONOMIC CRISIS THROWS MORE PEOPLE
INTO UNEMPLOYMENT EACH DAY... ELEMENTARY PATRIOTISM SHOULD
SHOW THE AUTHORITIES THAT, INSTEAD OF USING CHEMICAL
SYSTEMS OF COCA ELIMINATION, THEY SHOULD USE MANUAL LABOR
WHICH DOES NOT HARM THE SOIL OR OTHER PLANTS..."

8. MAY 19 LA PAZ LIBERAL CATHOLIC "PRESENCIA" STORY
"THE FEDERATION OF CAMPESIÑOS OF THE CHIMORE REGION

DEPARTMENT OF STATE / CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY E.B. Root DATE 1/26/82

RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE

TS AUTH. REASON(S)

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TODAY REJECTED THE GOVERNMENTS DISPOSITIONS CONCERNING COCA COMMERCE.. CALLING FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ELIMINATE ALL CONTROL STATIONS...THEY ALSO SAID THAT UP TO NOW NO MORHT AMERICAN HELP HAS BEEN SENT TO THE CHAPARE REGION (WHERE MOST COCA IS GROWN) BUT THER HAS BEEN THE INTENTION TO DESTROY THE EARTH, AS IF BOLIVIA WAS A YANKEE COLONY."

9. MAY 19 "EL DIARIO" EDITORIAL: "WITH AN INTENSE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN, A HERVICIOE HAS BEEN TRIED IN THE YAPACANI REGION WHICH -- ACCOORING TO THE LITERATURE -- LEAVES NO EFFECTS IN THE EARTH...HOWEVER, OESPITE THE PROPAGANDA AND SCIENTIFIC REPORTS, IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT ALL ORGANIC CHEMICAL COMPOUNDS WHICH USE CHLORINE ARE TOXIC TO PLANTS, ANIMALS AND MICROORGANISMS..." EDITORIAL THEN COMPLAINS OF LACK OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR BOLIVIAN ERRAOICATION EFFORTS: "SUBSTITUTION OF COCA DEMANOS...A NUMBER OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES...BUT UNTIL NOW, BOLIVIA IS THE ONLY COUNTRY OF WHICH DEMANDS HAVE BEEN MADE, BUT WHICH HAS NOT RECEIVED COOPERATION TO MAKE THIS TASK POSSIBLE."

10. ONE OF FEW STRONG GENERAL CONDEMNATIONS OF COCA CULTIVATIONS APPEARED IN MAY 16 SANTA CRUZ CONSERVATIVE "EL DEBER". EXCERPTS: "A FEW DAYS AGO, WITH UNUSUAL ENERGY...AN ANTI-COCA CAMPAIGN BEGAN IN OUR REGION. THE RESULTS HAVE BEEN IMPRESSIVE, AS WELL AS FOR THEIR REVELATION OF THE EXISTENCE OF AN INCREDIBLE NUMBER OF COCAINE "FACTORIES" AS FOR THE RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL THE BUSINESSMEN COMMAND...FOR THIS CAMPAIGN TO REACH ITS FINAL OBJECTIVE -- THAT IS, THE ERRADICATION OF COCA THROUGHOUT OUR COUNTRY, IT IS NECESSARY TO DO THE JOB WHEREVER COCA IS FOUND..IN SHORT, WE BELIEVE IT NECESSARY TO DO AWAY WITH THE SPECIAL PRIVILEGE THE CAMPESINOS HAVE OF LEGALLY POSSESSING LARGE COCA PALNTATIONS..IF WE WANT TO EFFECIENTLY COMBAT THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC, THE ERRADICATION OF COCA MUST BE TOTAL, THROUGH THE NATIONS, WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION..."

11. MAY 14 "LOS TIEMPOS" COMMENTARY: "ARCHBISHOP GENERO PRATA, IN RECENT PUBLICATIONS, HAS TAKEN A POSITION IN FAVOR OF THE CAMPESINOS WHO ARE GRAVELY THREATENED AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO DESTROY COCA PLANTATIONS BY MEANS OF HIGHLY TOXIC HERBICIDES...THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TEND TO ITS OWN BUSINESS INSTEAD OF KILLING BOLIVIAN AGRICULTURE AND FORCING BOLIVIAN CAMPESINOS INTO HUNGER AND MISERY... IT IS A PROVEN FACT THAT SIMPLY THE INHALATION OF THESE TOXIC SUBSTANCES, BE THEY INSECTICIOES OR HERBICIDES, CAUSES LEUKEMIA...WE PERSONALLY KNOW OF TWO PROVEN CASES WHICH CONSTITUTE A DRAMATIC TRIAL FOR THE PATIENTS AND THEIR FATHERS...."

12. MAY 13 "LOS TIEMPOS" COMMENTARY: "PUBLIC OPINION HAS BEEN SHOWN THAT THE FEARED HERBICIDE, 2 4 D, CORRECTLY

APPLIED, DOES NOT OFFER A TAREMT TO OTHER CROPS, OR THE EARTH OR MIMAPS OF HUMANS...WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SEE THE TWO SIDES OF THE COIN. ON THE ONE HAND, THE EFFECTIVENESS AND HARMLESSNESS OF 2 4 D CORRECTLY APPLIED FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF COCA AND THE OTHER HAD, THE DRAMA OF THOUSANDS OF CAMPESINOS, WHO BEING DEPRIVED OF THEIR COCA CROPS, FIND THEMSELVES ON THE ROAD TO HUNGER AND MISERY..."

13. MAY 9 "LOS TIEMPOS" STORY: "A GROUP OF PRIESTS, MONKS AND NUHS EXPRESSED THEIR PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE POSITION ASSUMED BY ARCHBISHOP GENARO PRATA AGAINST THE USE OF DANGEROUS HERVICIDES IN OUR COUNTRY...THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS...AFFIRM THE THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC MUST NOT THREATEN THE RIGHTS OF THE SECTOR OF CAMPESINOS WHO HAVE OEDICATED THEMSELVES TO THE CULTIVATION OF COCA..."

14. MAY 8 "PRESENCIA" STORY: "SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS HAVE STATED THAT 2 4 D HERBICIOE COULO HAVE A LEVEL OF TOXICITY THAT COULO ENDANGER THE EVNIRONMENT AND EVEN THE HEALTH OF THE INHABITANTS..." HOWEVER, "TECHNICIANS OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE... EXPLAINED THAT THIS HERBICIOE HAS BEEN PROVEN TO BE PRACTICALLY HARMLESS AND AT THE SAME TIME VERY EFFICIENT IN THE FROM EMPLOYED. THEY NOTE THAT THIS PRODUCT HAS BEEN USED FOR FIFTEEN YEARS IN SANTA CRUZ. THE CAMPESINOS OF YAPACANI (WHERE 2 4 D USED AGAINST COCA CROPS) EMPLOY OTHER HERBICIDES OF HIGHER TOXIC LEVEL WITHOUT HAVING CAUSED LOSSES..." REMAINOER OF ARTICLE DISCUSSES HARMLESSNESS OF 2 4 D AND PROBLEMS WITH RECENT INCREASES IN COCA HECTARAGE.

15. MAY 8 "EL DIARIO" STORY: "COCHABAMBA --SPECIALISTS REPRESENTING NATIONAL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS... ANNOUNCED THEMSELVES AGAINST THE USE OF 2 4 D OR ANY OTHER HERBICIDE OFR THE ELIMINATION OF COCA..." ARTICLE THEN DESCRIBES SYMPOSIUM ON "THE ECOLOGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES OF BOLIVIA" WHICH WAS PRINCIPALLY CONCERNED WITH ATTACKING COCA ELIMINATION.

16. APRIL 27 SANTA CRUZ CONSERVATIVE "EL HUNDO" REPORTS

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AS A RESULT SUCCEEDED IN AT LEAST BLUNTING ANTI -
HERBICIDE CAMPAIGN, AND CONCRETELY RESULTED IN NUMEROUS
EDITORIALS AND COMMENTARIES PRESENTING OBJECTIVE VIEW
OF ISSUE. ESPECIALLY USEFUL WAS UNITED NATIONS JULY 27
1979, SUDY GROUP REPORT ENTITLED "METHODS FOR
ERRADICATING ILLICIT NARCOTICS CROPS," WHICH WAS
TRANSLATED BY POST AND WIDELY CITEO AS DATA SOURCE BY
BOLIVIAN MEDIA.
MEYER

UNCLAS LA PAZ SECTION 3 OF 3 3070

FOR AR, PGM/G, PGM/T, VOA, PGM/RC

THAT "FIFTY CAMPESINOS MAY HAVE BEEN KILLED IN ROUNDUP
AGAINST NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS -- CAMPESINOS REPORT
BOMBARDMENTS FROM HELICOPTERS AND USE OF TOXIC HERBICIDES...
DURING THE OPERATIONS OF THE NARCOTICS DEPARTMENT, THE
ARMY AND THE UNITED STATES DEA, CAMPESINOS WERE KILLED
IN A NUMBER WHICH CANNOT BE EXACTLY VERIFIED BECAUSE OF
THE REFUSAL OF THE AUTHORITIES TO PERMIT THE
FAMILIES OF THE VICTIMS INTO THE AREA OF THE CONFRONTATIONS
..." (NOTE: THIS STORY ALSO WAS GIVEN HEAVY PLAY BY
SANTA CRUZ AND COCHABAMBA RADIO AND WAS WIDELY SPREAD
BY WORD OF MOUTH).

17. APRIL 29 "HOY" STORY: "HERBICIDES COULD AFFECT
FUTURE GENERATIONS -- THE SOCIEDAD MULTIDISCIPLINARIA
DE INVESTIGACION EN MEDICINA Y FARMACOLOGIA AUTOCTONA
DENOUNCED THAT THE HERBICIDES WHICH ARE BEING USED TO
ELIMINATE COCA PLANTATIONS IN VARIOUS REGIONS OF THE
COUNTRY WILL CAUSE GRAVE GENETIC DEFORMATIONS IN MAN,
POISON OR FOOD, DAMAGE THE VEGETATION AND DESTROY
EXTENSIVE AGRICULTURAL REGIONS. WHILE THE UNITED STATES
IN DEVELOPING ITS OWN COCA PLANTATIONS, IN BOLIVIA
THIS CULTIVATION IS BEING DESTROYED... TO THE CONTRARY
OF WHAT IS CLAIMED BY NORTH AMERICAN SCIENTISTS... THERE
ARE THOUSANDS OF CLAIMS BY VIETNAMESE WHO SUFFERED
GRAVE GENETIC DEFECTS FROM THE HERBICIDES USED IN THE WAR
... THE MEMBERS OF THE INSTITUTION INDICATED THAT THE
UNITED STATES ARE DEVELOPING THE CULTIVATION OF COCA,
TO PUT THAT COUNTRY INTO THE SAME FAVORABLE SITUATION
WHICH IS HAS IN REGARD TO TIN..." (SIMILAR STORY WAS
CARRIED IN MOST MEDIA. NOTE THAT THE SOCIEDAD
MULTIDISCIPLINARIA... ETC. APPEARS TO BE SHADOW
ORGANIZATION THROWN TOGETHER TO COMBAT DESTRUCTION
OF COCA.)

18. MAY 4 COCHABAMBA "LOS TIEMPOS" CARRIED HALF PAGE
ADVERTISEMENT BY "VANGUARDIA FEMENINA BOLIVIANA" CITING
VARIETY OF DOCUMENTS, ETC., TO "PROVE" THAT COCAINE
IN BENEFICIAL, ATTACK HERBICIDES, US AMBASSADOR TO
BOLIVIA, ETC. "VANGUARDIA FEMENINA" ALSO APPEARS TO
BE SHADOW ORGANIZATION.

19. MAY 6 CONSERVATIVE LA PAZ "JORNADA" EDITORIAL
"NO TO HERBICIDES -- FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE REPUBLIC
COME VOICES OF ALARM ABOUT THE DANGER OF QUICKLY
CONVERTING HUNDREDS OR THOUSANDS OF HECTARES INTO
DESERTS... BY MEANS OF IRRIGATION BY THE HERBICIDE 2-4 D...
TO ELIMINATE THE DAMAGE OF THE DRUG TRAFFIC, THERE
ARE TWO GUILTY NATIONS -- THE PRODUCERS AND THE CONSUMERS.
THE PRODUCING COUNTRIES SHOULD PROCEED WITH ENERGY
AGAINST THE MAFIAS, BUT WITHOUT DESTROYING SOURCES OF
LIFE AND WORK..."

20. USICA AND OTHER MISSION ELEMENTS MADE CONSIDERABLE
EFFORTS TO HELP GOB PRESENT ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT
COCA ERRADICATION AND NATURE OF 2-4 D HERBICIDE, AND

UNCLASSIFIED